

The FCC asks whether a new toll-free code should be activated gradually; and what measures it should take to effectuate gradual implementation, such as limiting the quantity of numbers that can be drawn from the database in a given time period (para. 24). The FCC further proposes limiting the quantity of numbers that can change from reserved to assigned to working status in one day (para. 25). MCI does not support daily limitations of this nature or phased introduction of the toll-free resources because customers should have the opportunity to request and obtain any available number in the 888 resource, rather than having to wait until the number is released at a later, arbitrary time.

C. THE COMMISSION SHOULD DIRECT THE DATABASE MANAGER
TO HOLD CLAIMED VANITY NUMBERS IN UNAVAILABLE
STATUS UNTIL THEIR ASSIGNMENT IS RESOLVED

The FCC asks for comment on certain measures designed to protect the interests of the holders of 800 vanity numbers: (1) allowing a right of first refusal to permit the holder of a number to receive the equivalent 888 number (para. 41-43); (2) identifying subscribers by industry codes and preventing assignment of the 888 number to a company with the same code as the 800 holder (para. 44-45); (3) holding vanity numbers in the 888 code until a percentage of that code has been depleted (para. 46); and (4) sharing an intercept message between the similar 800 and 888 numbers

(para. 46).

There are valid arguments on both sides of this issue. In view of the issue's complexity, MCI agrees with the proposal of the SMS/800 Number Administration Committee (SNAC) to have RespOrgs compile a list of all numbers that would be protected under such a policy and have the SMS hold these numbers in unavailable status until a time after the opening of the code. This would allow the 888 code to be opened as scheduled on March 1, 1996. These protected numbers could then be assigned after the Commission resolves the issues associated with protection of vanity numbers, either to the vanity holders or to subscribers in general.⁵

As to the merits of the Commission's proposals, MCI believes the right of first refusal has the greatest potential for protecting the right of the 800 holder. MCI has polled its subscribers and has found substantial support for the right of first refusal. MCI itself has numbers that it would consider protecting in this manner.

MCI does not support the proposal to use industry codes to protect vanity numbers (para. 44-45). This option is so administratively complex for all parties involved as to be unworkable. First, assigning a classification that would have meaning in a fluid communications industry would be

⁵ MCI also believes the Commission should direct the database manager to assign the unavailable status to any numbers to be used for toll-free Directory Assistance until the FCC resolves the proceeding examining toll-free DA (para. 48).

virtually impossible. The Commission recognized in the Notice the difficulty of classifying conglomerates that may fit within multiple classifications. Second, RespOrgs and the database manager would be so consumed with questions associated with classifications that they could scarcely perform other required duties. Third, tracking the number beyond initial assignment would require new procedures since the database does not currently keep a history of assigned numbers. Fourth, carrying the protection mechanism beyond the 888 resource, as envisioned by the proposal, would raise the system to nightmarish proportions. Fifth, as the Commission recognized in the Notice, this proposal would delay introduction of new codes because of the technical changes that would have to be made to the system.

Finally, MCI does not support use of a transitional intercept message shared by the holders of 800 and 888 numbers. An intercept message would not be workable for many voice and data commercial applications because the intercept message would interrupt the automated message stream. Also, providing this capability for all toll-free numbers would create a tremendous burden on the network and would require costly modifications.

**D. THE COMMISSION SHOULD NOT IMPOSE A CIRCUIT BREAKER
RULE ON DAILY OPERATIONS**

The FCC asks for comment on use of a circuit breaker method similar to the method used to suspend trading on the

stock market for short periods (para. 52-55). One proposed model would be used to effect conservation when exhaust of a toll-free code is approaching. The other proposed model might be activated to conserve numbers on a daily basis.

The Commission proposes that the exhaust conservation model could be executed when the exhaust date for the current toll-free code is announced. The RespOrg would be limited to a weekly consumption rate equal to the weekly average quantity of numbers it obtained during the previous twelve months. If the RespOrg exceeded the threshold, it would be limited to one-half of its weekly average consumption rate until one month after the new code is activated.

MCI supports using a conservation mechanism during periods when the toll-free code is approaching exhaust. The proposed model is consistent with the adjusted allocation model that is being used during the final months of 800 conservation. MCI supports using this allocation model for exhaust conservation for subsequent toll-free codes.

MCI does not support a conservation rule that would apply to daily operations of the RespOrgs. The Commission proposes that each RespOrg's rate of consumption would be computed by averaging the five days of highest consumption during the previous month, and that if the RespOrg were to reserve three times that rate in a single day, the circuit breaker rule would take effect.

As noted elsewhere in these comments, the Commission has not stated that it found any proof of hoarding or warehousing during its investigation of 800 number usage. Unless it can justify that there is a need for a cumbersome and complex daily conservation mechanism, no measure should be implemented. Absent a valid reason for such limitations, the customer should be able to obtain the numbers it needs, and the RespOrg should be in a position to reserve and obtain numbers for their customers.

E. THE COMMISSION SHOULD NOT REQUIRE IDENTIFICATION OF HIGH-VOLUME NUMBERS

The FCC asks whether a number that receives a high volume of calling should be identified for a potential subscriber of the number in another toll-free code (para. 47). It asks how high-volume numbers might be identified in the SMS.

It is easy to sympathize with the plight of the subscriber that obtains a number in the 888 resource that corresponds to a high-volume number in the 800 resource (this subscriber might expect a high number of misdials). However, as stated above, it is not currently possible to identify these numbers in the database. Consequently, the Commission should not require RespOrgs to identify these numbers.

III. MCI SUPPORTS A 50 PERCENT TRIGGER FOR THE PLANNING OF IMPLEMENTATION BEYOND 888

The FCC proposes that the industry identify a trigger that would alert the industry when the current toll-free code is approaching exhaust so the next code can be implemented (para. 27). It proposes that the triggering event might be when unassigned numbers in the 888 database decline to a specified percentage of total numbers, such as 50 percent. It asks whether it should mandate implementation of a new toll-free code on six months' notice to improve the transition to a new code.

MCI supports identification of a trigger and supports using 50 percent consumption as the trigger point. This should avoid some of the frenzy involved in the transition between the 800 and 888 resources. The 50 percent trigger also should be sufficient to accommodate accelerated depletion as occurred when the 800 resource approached exhaust. Nevertheless, the FCC should take into account the accelerated depletion model that is being developed by the Industry Numbering Committee.⁶ This forecasting concept uses an exponential modeling curve as a tool to predict the exhaust of the toll-free resources.

MCI also supports a mandate that implementation would need to occur six months after the trigger is announced. As

⁶ See draft letter from Denny Byrne and Bob Hirsch, Co-Chairs, Industry Carriers Compatibility Forum, to Doyle Griffin and Don Werner, Ordering and Billing Forum Moderators, regarding Toll-Free Resource Exhaust Planning Process, not yet dated.

the Commission stated in the Notice, six months should be adequate time to deploy hardware or conduct testing needed before a new code can support live traffic, especially since the SMS, Signaling Control Point vendors and switch vendors have stated that their products would support codes beyond 888.

MCI supports a requirement that all network switches in the U.S. should have installed, by February 1997, at least the software needed to support all toll-free codes reserved by the industry in January 1995 (para. 29). This would apply to all codes from 877 to 822.

MCI also supports an FCC requirement that 800, 888 and subsequent toll-free code calls will be routed by the local exchange carrier (LEC) over the same trunk groups connected to their interconnecting carriers (para. 30). As MCI stated in industry meetings on implementation of the 800 and 888 codes, routing toll-free calls through a tandem rather than an end office is inefficient and unnecessarily costly to interconnecting carriers.

MCI supports the FCC's tentative conclusion that each toll-free code should meet the call set-up time requirements established in the 800 database proceeding (para. 30). Finally, MCI would support oversight by the North American Numbering Council of implementation of codes beyond 888 (para. 27), with intervention by the Commission, as necessary.

IV. ADMINISTRATION OF TOLL-FREE DATABASES

MCI supports the Commission's conclusions related to tariffing of toll-free access. The Commission concludes that 888 service and subsequent toll-free codes should be treated as functionally interchangeable with 800 services in the LECs' 800 access tariffs (para. 56). It concludes that Part 69 provisions for 800 service would cover 888 service and that the LECs would not need a waiver of Part 69. It concludes that costs of providing 888 service should be treated in accordance with the procedures it established for 800 service and that the LECs should file their tariff revisions on not less than 45 days' notice.

V. MCI SUPPORTS COLLECTION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RELEASE TO THE PUBLIC IN AGGREGATE FORM

The FCC proposes that DSMI be required to submit periodic reports to the FCC on toll-free number utilization (para. 31). It proposes that these reports include information on each toll-free code, including: (1) quantity of numbers in spare status (available for assignment); (2) quantity of numbers in working status (in use); (3) the quantity of numbers assigned to working status each month; (4) estimated time remaining before that code is exhausted, along with the method used to calculate the estimated time remaining; and (5) quantity of numbers assigned to other categories contained in the industry guidelines. The FCC also asks whether information on the toll-free market should

be publicly available through the FCC, such as information on usage by type of toll-free number assignment (business, personal, or access (voicemail and paging)).

MCI agrees that additional information as outlined above should be compiled and released by the database manager. This type of information has been beneficial to the industry in its planning efforts for implementation of the 888 resource. MCI supports release of information to the public as aggregate, industry data only. Information should not be released on a RespOrg or individual subscriber basis. Information by type of usage, as suggested by the Commission, is not available, and would not be readily achievable.

VI. MCI SUPPORTS A LIMITED PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

The FCC asks whether educational effort, beyond individual carrier campaigns, needs to be undertaken to improve public awareness of the introduction of toll-free codes (para. 50).

MCI plans to continue its own campaign to educate its subscribers and users about the new toll-free code. However, MCI would support limited industry education, such as joint press releases and public relations activities, possibly including public service announcements. Although MCI expects that this limited effort would not be expensive, all carriers should be required to contribute to funding the

educational activities. Preparatory meetings should be open to representatives of all segments, RespOrgs, associations and customers.

VII. CONCLUSION

Therefore, in view of the foregoing, MCI supports advance reservation prior to opening of the 888 code. MCI supports holding 800 vanity numbers in unavailable status until a they can be resolved after the code is opened. MCI supports a 50 percent trigger for the planning of implementation beyond the 888 code. MCI supports collection of additional information and release in aggregate form. And, MCI supports a limited industry campaign to educate the public about additional toll-free resources.

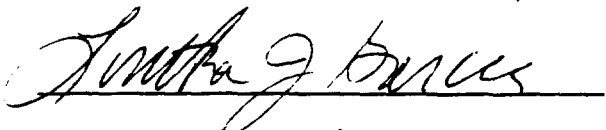
MCI does not support a requirement for an affirmative request from a subscriber before reserving a number, or a requirement for an escrow deposit when reserving a number. MCI does not support reducing the time periods during which

a number can be held in certain statuses, or further
restricting the quantity limitation on reserved numbers.

Respectfully submitted,

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EXHIBIT B

Table S-6. MANDATORY BUDGET PROPOSALS BY PROGRAM
(In millions of dollars)

	Estimate						Total 1998-2002
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	
Preserve Medicare		-4,310	-11,390	-22,150	-27,820	-34,550	-100,220
Strengthen Medicaid:							
Savings proposals		205	-1,597	-4,059	-7,313	-9,666	-22,430
New Initiatives:							
Children's health initiatives		344	587	934	1,362	1,530	4,757
Welfare reform proposals	39	619	793	975	1,194	1,315	4,896
Effects of other mandatory proposals		249	629	736	873	1,038	3,525
Subtotal, new initiatives	39	1,212	2,009	2,645	3,429	3,883	13,178
Net savings, Medicaid	39	1,417	412	-1,414	-3,884	-5,783	-9,252
Spectrum:							
Broaden and extend non-broadcast auctions		-1,400	-1,800	-3,800	-4,500	-5,600	-17,100
Auction analog broadcast						-14,800	-14,800
Auction 888 phone numbers		-700					-700
Auction a portion of the broadcast channels 60-69					-1,800	-1,700	-3,500
Subtotal, Spectrum	-2,100	-1,800	-3,800	-6,300	-22,100		-36,100
Other mandatory:							
Agriculture:							
Amend Welfare Reform Food Stamps provisions	362	836	659	600	405	835	3,335
Shift fund for Rural America from 2000 to 1998 to correct a drafting error		25	40		-30	-25	10
Enhance the farm income "safety net"		-21	-2	-2			-25
Use certain Forest Service fees to protect forest ecosystems							
Have beneficiaries of marketing orders pay administrative costs		-10	-11	-11	-11	-11	-54
Subtotal, Agriculture	362	830	686	587	364	799	3,266
Commerce:							
Extend surcharge on patent fees			-119	-119	-119	-119	-476
Defense:							
Sell from National Defense Stockpile						-200	-200
Education:							
Student loans:							
Reduce payments to lenders, restructure guaranty agencies and recover Federal reserves, reduce Federal administrative funding, and reduce borrower fees	-340	-1,050	-348	-226	-209	-1,294	-3,127
Improve third grade literacy		31	212	284	331	380	1,238
Invest in school construction		1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250		5,000
Repeal the mandatory appropriation under the Smith-Hughes Act of 1918		-1	-7	-7	-7	-7	-29
Subtotal, Education	-340	230	1,107	1,301	1,365	-921	3,082
Energy:							
Lease excess Strategic petroleum reserve storage space			-14	-37	-67	-83	-201
Sell Weeks Island Strategic petroleum reserve oil						-1,145	-1,145
Sell or lease naval petroleum and oil shale reserves			-10	2	2	2	-4
Subtotal, Energy			-24	-35	-65	-1,226	-1,350
Health and Human Services:							
Set annual targets to increase permanent adoptions and establish a financial bonus to states for increasing adoptions ¹							
Permit States to spend HCFA initial survey and certification fee (offset under revenue)		10	10	10	10	10	50
Establish health insurance for the families of workers in-between jobs		1,738	2,472	2,688	2,924		9,822
Establish purchasing cooperative grants		25	25	25	25	25	125

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, John E. Ferguson III, do hereby certify that copies of the foregoing Further Comments of MCI in the Matter of Toll Free Services Access Codes were sent, on this 21st day of July, 1997, via first-class mail, postage pre-paid, to the following:

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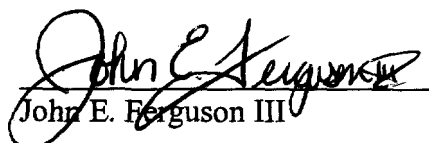
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